



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: September 12, 2022

TO: Assisted Living Facilities and Adult Day Care Centers

FROM: Tara Ragland, Director, Division of Licensing Programs

RE: Important Healthcare Updates

We would like to provide some important updates regarding COVID-19, as well as other pertinent healthcare items. Please review the following information and links provided.

Resources for Healthcare Professionals and Workers

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) provides consistent updates for healthcare professionals and workers. Their [website](#) is updated regularly and will provide you with the most up to date COVID-19 information. VDH also provides [clinician letters](#) on a monthly basis, which details current healthcare updates related to COVID-19, as well as other healthcare related topics. The [September 9, 2022](#), letter provides updates on COVID-19 boosters and coadministering vaccinations.

Updated CDC Guidance

The CDC has released updated guidance on [notifying contacts](#) when testing positive, testing guidance on [antigen test results](#), as well as [when to end isolation](#). Please review these important updates to ensure you are current with the most recent guidelines.

Updated COVID-19 Booster Vaccines

On August 31, 2022, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted Emergency Use Authorization for the updated Pfizer and Moderna [COVID-19 bivalent vaccines](#) to be used as booster doses for the prevention of severe SARS-CoV-2 infection in people aged 12 years and older at least two months following a completed primary series or booster vaccination.

The bivalent vaccines, also known as “updated boosters,” contain messenger RNA (mRNA) components of the original strain of SARS-CoV-2 and the BA.4 and BA.5 lineages of the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2.

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine, Bivalent, is authorized for use as a single booster dose in individuals aged 12 years and older.

The Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine, Bivalent, is authorized for use as a single booster dose in individuals aged 18 years and older.

Monovalent mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are no longer authorized as booster doses for individuals aged 12 years and older. Only individuals aged 5–11 years can receive a monovalent booster dose at this time.

Healthcare providers should report vaccine administration errors to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). To file an electronic report, please see the [VAERS website](#).

Additional guidance is available in CDC's [Interim Clinical Considerations](#).

Newly Authorized COVID-19 vaccine, Novavax

Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is under EUA for adults 18 years and older. It is given as a 2 dose primary series, separated by 3-8 weeks. People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised should also receive 2 doses, given 3 weeks apart (a 3rd primary dose is not currently authorized). Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is **not currently authorized for use as a booster dose, ONLY as a primary series**. For more information about the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine, visit [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine page](#).

Masking in ALFs

We would like to share a reminder regarding masking in ALFs and provide references from the [CDC](#) and the [COVID-19 Long-Term Care Task Force](#). We strongly encourage you to revisit your infection control plan, ensuring it indicates to follow CDC guidelines and VDH [considerations for PPE](#) to protect residents and staff from COVID-19 transmission. The following are source control recommendations in summary:

Source control should be used in *any* facility that provides healthcare. This is particularly important for individuals, *regardless* of their vaccination status, who live or work in counties with substantial to high community transmission or who:

- Are not up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses
- Have suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection or other respiratory infection
- Had close contact or a higher-risk exposure with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection for 10 days after the exposure
- Are moderate to severe immunocompromised

Monkeypox

Virginia currently has approximately 400 confirmed cases of [Monkeypox](#), with the bulk of the cases in the 20-39 year old age group. VDH's [guidance and updates](#) for healthcare providers is located on their website, and provides a wealth of information regarding testing, infection prevention and control and vaccine information to name a few.

Infection Prevention and Control

A new comprehensive statewide Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) training program through a partnership with VCU Gerontology CCE is now available. The program consists of;

- Monthly IPC webinars with infection preventionists and subject matter experts on topics specific to your role
- Weekly email updates with useful tools, infographics, videos, audio updates, and quick tips to expand your IPC knowledge
- On site workshop packages and supervisor lunch-and-learns also available
- Opportunity to receive certificates of attendance and contact credits for ALL learning modules
- Recognition for module completion
- FREE registration available!

VDH Team Contact Information

If you have any questions or further information, please reach out to the corresponding VDH email address for further information:

- Testing: testinginfo@vdh.virginia.gov
- Vaccination: covidpharmacysupport@vdh.virginia.gov
- Therapeutics: covid19therapeutics@vdh.virginia.gov
- Infection Prevention and Control: hai@vdh.virginia.gov